



Written testimony submitted to the Education Committee on HB 6662 An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning Education and HB 6663 An Act Establishing the English Learners' Bill of Rights

February 22, 2023

Co-Chairs Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, and Ranking Members Senator Berthel and Representative McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

My name is Jamilah Prince-Stewart, and I am the executive director of FaithActs for Education. We are Connecticut's Black-led, community-led education advocacy nonprofit, and we are 80 voters, 500 members, 6,000 committed voters, and thousands of congregants strong. **I am writing to oppose H.B. 6662, which implements the governor's proposed budget and to support H.B. 6663, the English Learners' Bill of Rights.**

I issue this testimony today because our people need, deserve, and demand justice.

I urge you to oppose this H.B. 662 because:

The proposed budget perpetuates longstanding injustice.

Connecticut spends \$788 million more educating white students than students of color. Instead of closing this racial funding gap, the proposed budget maintains the status quo.

It also treats temporary funds like permanent solutions.

Districts will lose more than \$1 billion when federal COVID relief runs out. We need to make up for lost funding, or our children will continue to pay the price.

The proposed budget robs Peter to pay Paul. Public schools should be funded fairly based on their students' need. This includes traditional, magnet, charter, and vocational-technical schools.

We need a budget that will take into account the bold moves toward equity that H.B. 5003 outlines. The governor's budget must fully fund our education system at a time when outcomes for our children are decreasing, and our surplus is plentiful. Please vote "no" on H.B. 6662 and continue to work on a budget that finally does right by Connecticut's children.

To that end, I urge you to support H.B. 6663 because **it promotes equity by providing language access.**



This bill enhances communication between home and school and makes it easier for English Learning families to engage with school communities. It supports multilingual families with the information they need to engage with schools. And it ensures all kids have access to learning and social-emotional development experiences, regardless of language or immigration status.

This bill is a meaningful step in the right direction that will have a powerful impact for the lives of EL families. I would also like to thank our champions, Rep. Antonio Felipe and Rep. Juan Candelaria, and Governor Lamont for taking up this issue. FaithActs looks forward to working with this committee to continue to strengthen and improve this important legislation.

Our children deserve equity, and it is our responsibility to provide it.
Please oppose H.B. 6662, which implements the governor's proposed budget, and support H.B. 6663, the English Learners' Bill of Rights.

Jamilah Prince-Stewart
New Haven, CT 06511

FaithActs for Education
857 Post Rd, Suite 310
Fairfield, CT 068424